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LETTER DATED 8 JUNE 1993 FROM THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATIVE OF IRAQ TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

I have the honour to inform you that the Iraqi side has learned with surprise of the session held by the Special Commission on 10 and 11 May 1993, to which were invited several journalists and friends of Mr. Rolf Ekéus, Chairman of the Special Commission, as well as representatives of several countries. The session was devoted to discussion of the activities of the Special Commission in implementation of its mandate pursuant to resolution 687 (1991), the conclusions of the Commission regarding those activities and the future course of work.

Remarks and observations were made at the session by the "guests" of the Special Commission. We do not find it appropriate to comment on their views, despite the political preconceptions and extremist judgements aired which bespoke a manifest hostility to Iraq and a clear intention to fabricate pretexts for the continuation of the iniquitous embargo against the Iraqi people. We should like to focus solely on the technical and political opinions and conclusions expressed by the Chairman of the Commission.

On the technical side, the Chairman of the Special Commission claimed that his Commission did not have a full understanding of Iraq's programmes in the biological, chemical, nuclear and ballistic fields.

The voicing of such a conclusion by the Chairman of the Special Commission over two years after the beginning of the work of the Special Commission and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) is incomprehensible and at variance not only with the facts, which we shall review rapidly, but even with the statements of the Chairman of the Special Commission himself, and in particular his statement of 12 January 1993 at Stockholm, in which he said "the compliance of Iraq has been successful thus far, and it would be terrible if the remaining 5 per cent of the implementation was not completed". It is also contrary to the conclusion reached by the Director-General of IAEA, Mr. Hans Blix, which he stated on 20 May 1992 at Washington, saying "over these two years we have drawn a detailed map of the Iraqi nuclear programme, and I think we can now definitely say that we feel we have an integrated picture of the Iraqi programme; I do not think anything is missing from that picture".

Therefore, Mr. Ekéus's statement that he did not have a full understanding of Iraq's programmes deliberately confers a powerful ambiguity on the mandate of the Special Commission and the voluminous and extremely detailed work which it has undertaken over the last two years, for the accomplishment of which it has made use of the resources of numerous States, including such important States in the Security Council as the United States of America, the United Kingdom, France and Russia. These and other States have provided the Special Commission with scientists, experts, extremely advanced equipment and materials, helicopters and American U-2 spy planes, in addition to United Nations and IAEA experts and equipment.

The Special Commission has sent to Iraq during this period 56 inspection teams, 12 special expert missions, and these teams have carried out over 1,100 inspections to ascertain what sites and facilities are present in Iraq in all parts of the country, from the north to the south and from the east to the far west. Most of the inspections have taken place without warning. The Commission has not excluded from its inspections prisons, sports grounds, universities, bread ovens, abattoirs, civilian shelters, sewers, irrigation dams, hospitals and government office buildings. In addition to its inspections, the Special Commission has made use of American and other satellite networks to collect information and pictures, and it has used American U-2 spy planes to make, as at the end of May 1993, 137 flights over Iraq for the purposes of the Special Commission and others. Furthermore, the Special Commission has used helicopters to make hundreds of reconnaissance flights over Iraqi sites and facilities.

From these facts we conclude that Mr. Ekéus's statement that he does not have a full understanding of Iraq's programmes can only be explained by the fact that it is not objective, is contrary to the irrefutable facts and is aimed at introducing ambiguity and confusing the issue in favour of a prior intention which bears no relation to the technical and material contents of resolution 687 (1991); consequently, it is aimed at justifying the continuation of the iniquitous embargo against the people of Iraq.

With regard to the opinions and conclusions of a political nature expressed by Mr. Ekéus, we should like to raise an important question, namely: is the mission of Mr. Ekéus political or technical? Does he have a right, as Chairman of the Special Commission, to make political statements? It is regrettable that at this session Ambassador Ekéus made extremely radical political statements with respect to Iraq which come within the framework of interference in its internal affairs in a way that bears no relation to the mandate of the Special Commission, on which the session was held. This prompts one to raise the following question: how can the Chairman of the Special Commission conduct the work of his Commission with the requisite literal interpretation and objectivity if he holds such hostile political views towards Iraq?

Perhaps the gravest matter is that Ambassador Ekéus has endeavoured to link these political views to the work of his Commission and has begun to speak of the relationship of his Commission to the Arab-Israeli conflict and to oil prices. This tendency again raises grave questions over the credibility of the Special Commission, the nature of its mandate and the intentions of some of its members.

I should be grateful if you would have this letter circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Nizar HAMDOON
Ambassador
Permanent Representative